

NEED TO KNOW: FLAME RETARDANT (FR)

Most fabric that is certified as Flame Retardant (FR) has been topically treated in an immersion process with a chemical fire retardant after the fabric has been woven. All cottons and other natural fibers certified as flame retardant are FR topically treated. Some synthetic fabrics are also topically treated. Because the treatment is topical, it will wear out in time, and repeated cleanings will cause the flame retardancy to dissolve sooner.

Most flameproofing chemicals are water soluble and will dissipate through dry cleaning. Draperies made from FR fabrics should be retreated per manufacturer's directions. For this reason, "FR" flame retardancy is certified for only one year.

It is required by law that materials be certified as flame retardant according to the standards set by NFPA 701. The International Fire Code used adopted by Colorado Springs Fire Department states:

807.1 General. Combustible decorative materials, other than decorative vegetation, shall comply with Sections 807.2. through 807.5.6.

806.2 Artificial vegetation. Artificial decorative vegetation shall meet the flame propagation performance criteria of Test Method 1 or Test Method 2, as appropriate, of NFPA 701. Meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of Test Method 1 or Test Method 2, as appropriate, of NFPA 701 shall be documented and certified by the manufacturer in an approved manner. Alternatively, the artificial decorative vegetation item shall be tested in accordance with NFPA 289, using the 20 kW ignition source, and shall have a maximum heat release rate of 100 kW.



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DEFINITIONS:

PFR - Permanently Fire Retardant - Fabric that has been certified as PFR has been woven from fibers that are noncombustible for the life of the fabric. For this reason, the fire retardancy of IFR fabrics will last for the life of the fabric and will not dissipate after cleaning.

NFR - Not Fire Retardant

CNFR - Cannot Be Made Fire Retardant - If "CNFR" is indicated for a fabric, that fabric cannot be treated for fire retardancy and, as such, should not be used in public venues. Among the types of fabrics that cannot be made fire retardant are certain synthetic and/or metallic fabrics.

CBFR - Can Be Made Fire Retardant - If "CBFR" is indicated for a fabric, that fabric can be treated for fire retardancy. Such treatment would include topical treatment in an immersion process, making the fabric "FR." Some synthetics can be made fire retardant.

FLAME RETARDANT DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Label each item with the date treated, by whom it was treated and the name of treatment used.
2. Use a log book with the date treated, by whom it was treated and the name of the treatment that was used.



For More Information:

Colorado Springs Fire Department
719-385-5950
coloradosprings.gov/schoollink